

8 April 1982

Falklands

- It would be sad if Falkland precipitated the downfall of the Thatcher Government and the long-run effect was that the country ended up with an economy unable to sustain proper defence for 56 million people rather than 1,800.



Falklands

- Critical path-wise, it was essential to get the task force moving fastest and soonest to the area, whatever the strategy. There was no conceivable strategy which did not require some military/naval presence. At the very worst, the ability to go directly to the aid of the Falklanders if they were themselves being mistreated (basic hostage/hijack tactics, encircle the "aircraft" with armed men).

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- Asset freeze, with the ratio 4:1 may be misguided.

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- Check the Cabinet discussion that led to the task force decision.

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- "To put interest rates up would simply compound the problem" with export trade already affected by the situation, as regards South American/Latin American countries.



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- The responsible Departments are not good at crisis management, cannot structure it, game it. Civil Service Department, Industry, Energy, Transport and their respective crises. So we're assuming, I hope wrongly, that there's a need for some structured thinking here too.

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- If it would help to discuss, or for me to talk to Francis etc.

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- I don't know what your covert strategy is and our advice may well be exactly what it is already.

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- Refer to Ray Whitney. Perhaps also to Times leaders. And see Lord Wigg's letter of 6 April about the Times leader - wrong on every major issue. (All this stuff about the Times is in the context of fanning the flames of the jingoism instead of letting realism begin to take over now.) Charlie Douglas-Home getting out of his depth.

Falklands

- Getting the task force out there fast reduces the risk of any ill treatment of the islanders.

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- Ensure the two parties look as if they have both done well in negotiation (just like the unions).

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- The Times leader of 5 and 6 April are the ones I refer to. Quite idiotic. They're just getting over-excited when what is required is very calm, careful analysis.